

Nashville Intelligence

Issue

13

News + views

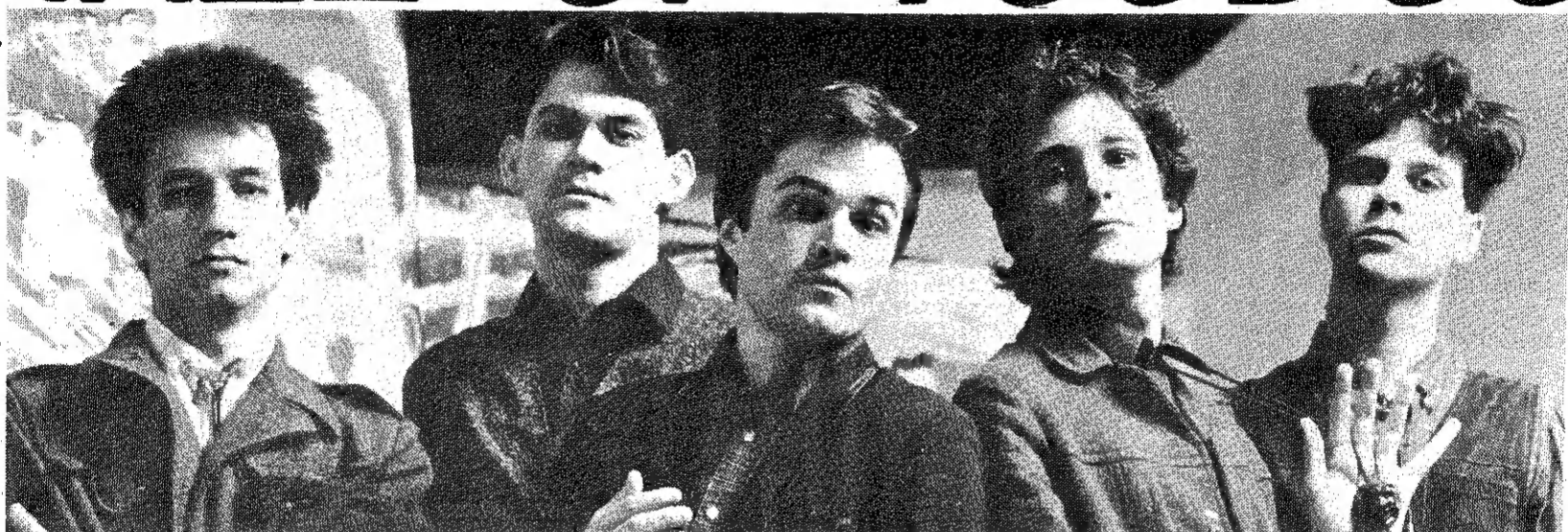
Reviews

FREE

MAY

WALL OF VOODOO

L to R:
Nanini
Gray
Noland
Ridgway
Moreland



by Allen Green

Wall of Voodoo began in 1977 when Stanard Ridgway, vocals, keyboards, etc., and Marc Moreland, guitars, joined forces and formed Acme Soundtracks Co. (specializing in rejected scores for low-budget sci-fi, horror, and Canadian tourist films). With the addition of Moreland's brother Bruce on bass and keyboards; and a rhythm machine, Acme Soundtracks became a band dubbed Wall of Voodoo...for the curious among you, when the band was young, they strove to duplicate the well-known Phil Spector "wall of sound". Then one day they realized what they were making was a (you guessed it) wall of VOODOO.....

Synthesist Chas T. Gray and percussionist Joe Nanini joined up in 1979 and about a year later, Wall of Voodoo released their debut EP "Imaginatively titled Wall of Voodoo". Shortly after that, they appeared in the film "Urgh! A Music War". In August '81, WOV released "Dark Continent", and after the Dark Continent "Boomsnap Tour of '81", Bruce Moreland departed and later, started his own band, War Diary. WOV recorded Call of the West as a quartet and then augmented their live sound with the addition of Bill Noland on synth and cornet. Bill was no stranger to the band, having been hanging around the band since their early days.

In late '82 Wall of Voodoo scored a progressive radio hit with "Mexican Radio"...a catchy ditty inspired by an atmospheric quirk in the vicinity of Los Angeles CA which enables an adventurous radio listener to discover a whole new culture via the un-PC-regulated radio stations that bounce off the mountains from south-of-the-border. Mexican Radio's success was at least partially spurred on by MTV. The highly imaginative Mexican Radio video features authentic footage of Mexican society, scenes of the band lip-syncing in front of the Call of the West doorway, and witty little things like iguana-on-a-spit and Stan Ridgway's face emerging from a huge bowl of beans (an idea he reluctantly admits was his).

After their recent Nashville appearance, I spoke with Stan for a half-hour or more. Since their bio, and an earlier interview on WKDA, gave me all the practical info I was after, I tried to ask more off-the-wall questions so readers might be able to understand how the lead vocalist for a band responsible for such classic examples of parody(?) as "Back in Flesh", "Me and My Dad", and "Lost Weekend" thinks. What follows is an extract from this conversation.

NIR: What's the most unique place you've ever played?

Stan: The most unique place we've ever played probably was our first job which was at Immaculate Heart Girl's School in Hollywood at the corner of Franklin and Western Ave. It's now the American Film Institute. We played there in the girls dormitory to about 200 girls in Catholic uniforms. I didn't even sing then, it was just music...it was like soundtrack stuff we'd done for various film projects we'd gotten into. That was pretty strange because Marc at one point tripped over this wire and plunged the whole auditorium into darkness. This was hailed as high-concept by big art-monsters in town...we just nodded and said "yes, that's true" and went home alone.

NIR: How does a typical Wall of Voodoo song come into being?

Stan: Usually I'll have set melodic ideas for it and I'll come in...and I'll work it over with the band and get it kind of sketched out in an arrangement. Once the arrangement's there...once it has a cohesive identity, I'll take it home on cassette and I'll think as to what that music says to me...usually the music will draw pictures for me, or kind of act as a soundtrack to a movie that's not yet written. So I'll think to myself "what does this sound like?" It's all very arbitrary. In the end I'll usually come up with something that has something to say with the music. It's very interesting how sometimes these things might happen because I might get a piece of music that I've gotten together that maybe sounds happy, or positive, and then I think to myself "what kind of emotion are we going to be able to generate if I stick a negative lyric behind this positive music?" Then you end up with something that's kind of melancholy, kind of a sad joy. I find that more interesting than saying "well here's a happy piece of music, let's write a happy song." I'll try to mix it up as much as I can to amuse myself..

NIR: How would you say this recent, all-of-a-sudden wave of commercial success has affected your outlook on things?

Stan: It's made me realize, really, the whole nature of the music business, and how much I really dislike it, and how much I'm really at odds with it. Then I think to myself "my god, I like music, I like to play it...how do I fit in?" So then I think to myself "Well, it's more of a challenge to see how you fit into something that really seems to be kind of incongruous to what you're about," and I'll see what happens. To me, more success means more people listening to it, more people buying it, which is really what everybody wants. It depends on if you go after approval, or if approval is something you want...I mean everybody wants approval, but if you NEED approval, you're going to be hit with a

certain kind of "modus operandi" that's really not going to be that conducive to healthy, creative endeavors...because you're going to be doing it for an ulterior motive other than one of honesty. You're going to be doing it for a living, see? So that's what's really strange about making music and doing it in this realm. People like myself that are in the music business, we're like anyone else, and this goes without saying. These people pay bills, they have rent payments...but you start thinking to yourself "well, how am I best to do what I like to do, what I consider to be worthwhile, and at the same time hit as many people as I can, communicate to as many people as I can." We don't really want to be an elitist band. We don't want to function solely in a compartmentalized world where only this amount of people listen to it. These people happen to be privy to some sort of information before they can appreciate it. We'd rather have a music that everyone can like...a shoe salesman in Whittier could like just as much as a professor at M.I.T. But that's the challenge in as how you do that. I think it's kind of interesting to see how each person defines this. Hopefully we won't take the wrong path. There's really no telling, I think we're just going to see what happens.

NIR: What's your favorite Western movie?
Stan: I like all the Sergio Leone movies. As far as western movies, those are really my favorite...I think it's interesting that I think those are some of the better westerns made and they were made in Italy! So I really think that sometimes the removal of ones initial emotional responses from the medium

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The BANGLES were at Cantrell's Friday, April 22, and they were GREAT!! There's no way to possibly describe it for you if you missed it; it was one of those magical nights everyone yearns for where everything connects just right for a band who respond with non-stop music that's fast and frenzied and just gets better and better song after song until its over and you catch your breath feeling somewhat bedazzled. The BANGLES are an all girl band from California who play modern garage band rock with a vengeance and are currently touring to support the release of their debut 5-song EP on Faulty Records. Their set at Cantrell's attracted a crowd beyond belief (400 plus), many no doubt drawn by the comparisons some had made between the BANGLES and another, better known, California female group, the GOGOS (boo, hiss).

From the first chord, the BANGLES had the crowd going. Bassist Annette Zilinskas and drummer Debbi Peterson combined to drive the band while the lead and rhythm guitars of Vicki Peterson and Susanne Hoffs delivered a frantic series of hooks. Over all of this came some of the freshest sounding voices I've heard (everyone but Annette sang) as the girls swapped off on leads and harmonies. They sounded terrific and were lots of fun to dance to and watch. They took themselves and the crowd farther and faster with each song, culminating in their final encore, the Seeds' classic "Pushin' Too Hard" and a wild BANGLES* jam that proved the group could match and exceed the best of the 60's garage punk bands they are compared to.

The BANGLES, as individuals and a group, proved to be just as terrific backstage afterwards, relaxing, answering questions, and signing autographs. I introduced myself to singer/bassist Vicki Peterson (who mentions she likes the paper) and we talked:

N.I.R.: How are sales of the EP going?

VICKI: Real well. We're running into some distribution problems right now, but we've sold over 22,000 copies in the first 6 or 7 weeks.

N.I.R.: Were those mostly in L.A. where you're from? (2)
VICKI: A lot of that was in L.A., and then we went into another pressing so I don't know exactly how it's doing now.

N.I.R.: Have you had any distribution problems with Faulty (an independant label, formerly distributed by IRS)? I tried to get ahold of the Alleycats first album on Faulty and it took forever to find...

VICKI: We're having that problem right now. We're going into towns, walking into the record stores, and they don't have the record. It's ridiculous...

N.I.R.: How long has the record been out?

VICKI: We released it right about January. It was recorded last summer, though, so it's almost a year old.

N.I.R.: Have you done any recording since then?

VICKI: (Not really, but we)...took one of the songs off the EP and rerecorded parts of it, remixed it, that's "The Real World", and we put it on a 12" single for DJ's.

We rerecorded it just to get a better sound, a broader sound. We worked with David Conn who produced Rank and File.

N.I.R.: One thing I've just got to ask about after seeing you live...you have such a great garage band, mid-60's feel and sound, was that planned or did it just happen?

VICKI: That developed. It's something that we just all have in us, and it just came out when we all started playing together...um, it's just kind of that get up there and throw yourself around and just see what happens kind of attitude. We have a lot of fun. We all like to dance; we all like to move around and sing; singing is a big part of the whole thing. ...So we just get up there and we just thrash and that's what happens (laughs), whatever comes out of it...

N.I.R.: Is this your first tour out of California?

VICKI: No, we went on tour last November-December with the English Beat, and we did the entire U.S.--and Canada --with them. That was just a few months ago; this is our first time out on our own.

N.I.R.: Have you been getting a good response?

VICKI: Yeah, we've been getting a really good response, but the shows up till now have not been publicised at all, so people are just hearing about the show the day of the show, etc.; you know, there's just been no publicity up till now, so we've been playing to 100 people sitting in a club, and we'll get 2 encores from those 100 people, but it's still kind of disheartening. Tonight was a big change.

N.I.R.: What's the strangest place you've ever played?

VICKI: A movie lot in Clover City, Louisiana...The strangest place? We've played some strange places...

SUSANNE: Once we played somebody's balcony in Beverly Hills. We were outdoors with rear screen projection; it was really strange (laughs)...

N.I.R.: The band was just out on the balcony?

VICKI: We were out on the balcony and they had a movie screen behind us they were showing the films on...

N.I.R.: What kind of movies?

SUSANNE: Like motorcycle movies, and like Yellow Submarine and Performance...It was a real happening man...

N.I.R.: On to more serious subjects, I'll go ahead and ask "the question...you're an all girl band from L.A., and I'm sure you get a lot of comparisons to the GoGo's...

VICKI: With the Carrie Nations (the female parody band in Beyond The Valley Of The Dolls)...yeah (laughs) we get compared all the time to the Carrie Nations...

N.I.R.: I think it's because you both come from L.A. and both started about the same time. I really think it's a shame, personally, because there're two different sounds altogether...

VICKI: Debbi and I were playing in a band since 1977. The GoGo's were playing at about the same time; they started playing together way back then. The Bange, which was our name when we first got together, didn't start until 80-81, but all of us had been around in the music scene, had been experimenting with different things, and we just got together at that time. So really, they were playing the circuit before we were, but our beginings had nothing to do with their existance.

N.I.R.: But isn't it kind of disheartening to see a band that's probably not half as good as you are (Vicki smiles and laughs) go on and do as well as they have?

VICKI: No, we don't worry about it. There's room for all of us. We have faith that our sound is accessable enough to eventually get radio play, and we want radio play, we want that exposure and accessability, (but) we have a different sound and we're not the same band, you know. It's silly, because you're going to have more and more female musicians coming to the fore in rock music all the time. It's not even that much of a novelty any more if you look at what's on the charts now, there are a lot of female performers, and there will be more and more female musicians doing their own material and doing their own thing, and bringing their own act to thefore as time goes by. So, it's going to become less and less of a novelty, and people will start looking at the acts for their own individual worth (pause)...We Hope!

N.I.R.: Does the band have an underlying philosophy behind it to fall back on when things get rough?

VICKI: We have many philosophies actually, they come out of different times..."To your own garage be true", that's our basic philosophy...To never forget that no matter how serious and industry it all gets, that we're just having a good time basically, and what we're doing, the reason we're doing it is because we enjoy doing it. We're really seriously having a good time, and if we're ever not, then we'll stop. So when things get rough, we all have a blind faith that this is right, and this is going to work, and we have never even considered that it wouldn't.

N.I.R.: And is it working?

VICKI: Hopefully. Things just seem right; it just feels right.

- INTERVIEW + ARTICLE - ANDY

Nashville Intelligence Report

FIRST ANNIVERSARY

BENEFIT PARTY SHOW DANCE

CHILDREN OF NOISE

PRACTICAL STYLISTS

C.P.S.

GO JIMMY DUB

YOUNG GREY RUINS

SUBURBAN BAROQUE

SAT. MAY 28, 1983

CANTRELL'S

1901 Broadway
327-2356

\$ 3.00

MUSIC WILL START AT 8:00

Local News

WHERE DO WE BEGIN?! So much has gone on in the last month or so. Hot on the heels of the ENGLISH BEAT and R.E.M. show at Vandy's gym (which turned into a giant dancefest) the PSYCHEDELIC FURS delivered a near flawless at the War Memorial Auditorium. I for one was very impressed with both the music and the surroundings. Large enough to accommodate all the people and be comfortable, but not so large that you can't get worked up by the band wherever you are. Lighting and subtle smoke generators provided a perfect backdrop for the FURS' somber pop tunes. And wasn't it great to spill out onto the Legislative Plaza when it was all over?... The FURS left many sordid stories in their wake: Lead singer Richard Butler had his jacket (containing his passport) ripped off from backstage. Neither it nor its contents surfaced again despite repeated pleas for their return over WKDA. Also reportedly not amused was a certain father who reportedly woke Richard from a sound sleep the next day to inquire after his underage daughter who (so rumor has it) stayed out all night with some other members of the band. Can such things be?! Apparently the band managed to make the most of the delay for Richard's new passport; the band's saxophone player played as part of the "Whole Wheat Horns" for NRBQ's whole set the next night at Vanderbilt. The evening was really something; longtime Opry star Skeeter Davis joined NRBQ for two songs midway through their set and returned for the band's final encore, a rollicking version of "Shake, Rattle, and Roll" on which members of the PSYCHEDELIC FURS (backstage watching the whole time) also assisted... Vandy Concerts also put on a buffo RIGHTS OF SPRING this year, with local faves ACTUEL and PRACTICAL STYLISTS playing to very receptive crowds on Alumni Lawn at noon on respective afternoons. Everything culminated with a giant Reggae Festival the afternoon of Saturday, April 16, featuring Nashville's own AFRIKAN DREAMLAND and some imported talent from Jamaica... CAT'S CONCERTS also shifted into high gear with the great BANGLES show at Cantrell's (see article elsewhere) on April 22, and their spring dance under the stars and streetlights with PRACTICAL STYLISTS and FACTUAL the following Monday.

May 2 brought a reopening of the EXIT/IN when FACTUAL opened for WALL OF VODOO, and on just last Sunday, May 9, BASIC STATIC and BOWWOWWOW again made new music ring from the EXIT/IN. I like the place; it's got problems, but it's also got plenty of space for both audience and performers. The turnouts for the CAT'S Concerts have been respectable, but we'll need to be a lot more supportive and get a lot more people to the shows or we could lose a good thing. The time is clearly right for new music to establish itself firmly in Nashville (WKDA's ratings are up, an encouraging sign) so LET'S NOT BLOW IT... Now that we've hit the "big" events of the month, let's turn to the other little happenings that keep life interesting: Working, working, working--- FACTUAL are in the midst of recording and producing tracks for a 12" EP forthcoming this summer. The group hasn't settled on the songs to be included, but they've been trying out various bits of new material on audiences during their shows here last month. It was all very good, so I'm sure the final result will be just as impressive as their "Your Way" single is... Keep your eyes peeled for a new 12" 5-song EP from JASON AND THE NASHVILLE SCORCHERS. The tracks are all mixed, and everything's set to go, but it's release date is in limbo for a while due to the fact that negotiations are still ongoing with several record companies. So, release looks a ways off, but Jack and company may get fed up with it all and put it out on Praxis next week. You just never know... PRACTICAL STYLISTS and GO JIMMY DUB's cassette-only releases have reportedly been selling well (nothing spectacular, but steady sales none the less). If you haven't picked up on these cool local sounds yet, you should... YOUNG GREY RUINS have a demo tape circulating that I haven't heard myself, but have heard that it is quite good. Maybe we'll be seeing a release of some sorts from them soon. YOUNG GREY RUINS recently joined the list of Nashville bands who have played the 688 Club in Atlanta. The band's headline, first-time ever Atlanta debut on a Thursday night was a gutsy move, but one that paid off--- the crowd loved them and they were called back for encores. YGR will open for PYLON, DE Records recording artists from Athens, Ga., who are finally playing Cantrell's this Saturday, May 14. Should be great fun... GLOOM, DISPAIR, AND AGONY: Get well wishes for John Froeschauer of SUBURBAN BAROQUE whose hand and a lawnmower got tangled up, forcing the band to cancel their planned debut. It's hoped he'll be in fine form for the N.I.R. Benefit on May 28... It was no lawnmower but a state trooper that collided with Beaver (of the BUNNIES and JOHN HINKLEY & THE JUNIORS) and knocked out three of his front teeth (they later put 2 back in) in an automobile accident. Beaver's pretty much back to normal now... Hank Spooner, formerly with the PUPPETS, more recently with the BOYS NEXT DOOR, has gone home to Florida for a while... Also should note a change in the NO COMMENT line-up; Nathan, formerly with KGB, has replaced Doug who is now with BASIC STATIC... Fat of the COMMITTEE FOR PUBLIC SAFETY tells me all Hardcore lovers should look forward to their gig on June with *Legal Weapon* from Los Angeles, CA. Speaking of C.P.S., Uncle Dave has started DIXZINE, a fanzine xerox attempting to bring Hardcore bands and people throughout the South into contact with one another. they seek "a positive, intelligent voice of hardcore attitudes throughout the South... a fanzine written by everyone interested for everyone interested." Write DIXZINE at 3110 Nolensville Road; Apt. # 104; Nashville, TN; 37211 for a copy and more info. Send stamps!!!... Speaking of hardcore fanzines, we should mention SELF-DISTRUST from Louisville, KY, an interesting xerox-zine with lots of letters, pictures, articles, etc. Available free, but you'll need to send postage to SELF-DISTRUST; 2710 Pikes Peak Blvd.; Louisville, KY; 40214... And speaking of publications, N.I.R. staffers are springing up in a lot of places. The Vanderbilt Hustler ran an article and picture of Loren Gerson, a Vanderbilt alumnus and current Music Director at WKDA, and I got a few mentions in Pete Wilson's Arts Notes column for the paper and a letter I wrote the Hustler concerning their report of the GOOD WOMAN's ban on "new wave" music. For those interested, the Good Woman replied that they haven't banned anything, they were just

experimenting around last semester. We'll see who they book in the Fall... Allen Green's report on the Nashville Scene should be in the next issue of *Trouser Press*. I also have a letter published in the current "Q" issue of *Q*, that some of you might be interested in. Check out the rest of the issue too; it's an invaluable aid to any band who seek to expose themselves and their music... BACK TO THE REAL WORLD --- The RATZ first professional reunion at Cantrell's on Saturday April 29 turned out to be quite an evening. The band was in fine form, and the turnout good. Things began to get wild when someone started throwing raw chicken heads at Les and the boys, but they took it all in stride, even getting Scott of PRACTICAL STYLISTS to sing "Call It Quits". Les's mom reportedly was a bit concerned to find meat scraps in her son's clothes the next day, however... Later in the evening, two military-hardcore types were ejected from the club and sent back to Fort Campbell, KY, in their jeep after getting a bit too rowdy and obnoxious during IS/UGHT/CAT's set... speaking of obnoxious people, a certain local band has managed to do what nobody has managed to do before now--- offend personally each and every N.I.R. staffer by continually hyping their talents and their band's greatness. If you know who you are, please WORK on your attitudes and music and not us... On a happier note, summer tours out of Nashville may be in the works for CHILDREN OF NOISE (hot and solid in their first headline gig last month) and the BUNNIES (whose idyl single should also be out this summer). We wish both of these groups luck... Onto the regional and national items of interest: Everybody's favorite all-American dance band JIM BOB AND THE LEISURE SUITS got some good news when they returned home to Birmingham after some dates in Texas. Seems MITCH EASTER (producer of R.E.M., etc.) liked a demo tape of some new material they sent him and has agreed to work with the band for whatever they can afford to pay him. Whatta swell guy!... Louisville's BABYLON DANCE BAND, loved by many, hated by many, has broken up with some members continuing as ZOO DIRECTORS... New product out: R.E.M.'s *Murmur*; PYLON's *Chomp*; The B-5's *Whammy!*; Joe "King Carasco & the Crowns" *Weekend*; and a new 5-song 12" import EP from the GUN CLUB... If you own a copy of U2's *War* you may be interested to know that the Epiphone steel guitar used by the Edge on "Surrender" was purchased at Gruhn Guitars here in Nashville... And that'll about do it for this month's news. Don't forget the N.I.R. 6-Band Benefit Extravaganza Saturday May 28 at Cantrell's. It will start at 8:00 and it will be fun. SEE YOU THERE!!!

A quick mention here of some things I neglected to put in earlier. There's another ARC Record convention coming to Nashville. This one will be on a Sunday, May 22 from 9:00am till 4:30pm at the Holiday Inn--Vanderbilt. These conventions are a perfect chance to pick up some great bargains or hard to find items as well as sell or trade any records you haven't been listening to. FUN!... Looking down Cantrell's list of coming events, I should plug Eugene Chadbourne & SHOCKABILLY on May 22, Sunday, because they're really wild and fun and because CHILDREN OF NOISE are opening. Should be some evening... also, even though you've never heard of them, the next Sunday (May 29) will bring Jamaaladeen Pacuma and his band COSMETIC. Jamaaladeen has been called the "greatest electric bassist" by *Musician* *Player & Listener* and while I wouldn't go that far, his band COSMETIC (a bass, drums, guitar trio) is very HOT in New York right now and have been signed to Gramavision/Polygram. DON'T MISS THIS ONE... ABOVE BY ANDY REID.

ITEM: Southwind/Spanky's/Boardwalk/ 5' fill-in-the-blank is gone again... ALLEN This time after only two weeks. It seems that they suffered from inadequate management... their two weeks were plagued with things like incomplete PA systems, sound-checks that were supposed to be FINISHED by 5:00PM, and double (sometimes

triple) bookings... Russian Roulette & Suburban Baroque had literally covered ③ the town with posters for their April 15 & 16 shows when they found out that the club had also booked Burning Hearts & Invasion Of Privacy for those same nights. So it goes... When Jim Settles finds an adequate manager, the club is supposed to reopen, but I'll believe it when I see it.

ITEM: Elliston Square, that nifty little game room stuck behind Obie's Pizze on Elliston Place, has remodeled their lower level, added a stage and a fine PA system, and is now booking live music. Hugh Bennett, whose credits include booking the Exit/In and Cantrell's, as well as The Bluebird Cafe, has told us that the club will feature a new music/rock'n'roll format (!) and will serve as a venue for developing new acts. Call Hugh or his wife, Jewdy, at 269-6738 for bookings and more information.... Hey everybody, you've been screaming for an alternative to Cantrell's. This comfortable mid-size (seats about 80, stands quite a few more) room just might be it. Let's show them that they made the right move and show up.

ITEM: Kathryn Pate, from the Hots, debuted to Nashville audiences recently as Angelique, who along with Adrian front the hot new band, Chain Of Command. Their keyboard-oriented original music has already gone on the road around eastern USA, and their self-produced video is already in rotation on HBO's Video Jukebox and expected to hit MTV soon. Also, we can look for their debut EP to be out by June.


OKAY GANG THIS ONE'S FOR YOU:..... On Sat. May 14 after the Pylon gig down at CANTRELL'S someone (male?) busted one of the toilet water boxes in the mens bathroom. This is not a fun thing for CANTRELL'S to repair. Dare I say they are "pissed off". Glen Hunter offers a \$50 REWARD for anyone knowing any info. about the incident. Help him out. Anonymity honored. Club # 327-2356.

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CANTRELL'S

MAY


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MAY 18-WED.--	HATTY'S PATCH
MAY 19-THU.--	INVASION OF PRIVACY with Special Guest
MAY 20-FRI.--	PIGGIES
MAY 21-SAT.--	
MAY 22-SUN.--	EUGENE CHADBOURNE and SHOCKABILLY w/ CHILDREN OF NOISE
MAY 25-WED.--	To Be Announced
MAY 26-THU.--	ADONIS
MAY 27-FRI.--	The WHITE ANIMALS
MAY 28-SAT.--	N.I.R. BENEFIT with SUBURBAN BAROQUE CHILDREN OF NOISE C.P.S.--GO JIMMY DUB YOUNG GREY RUINS PRACTICAL STYLISTS
MAY 29-SUN.--	JAMAALADEEN PACUMA and COSMETIC

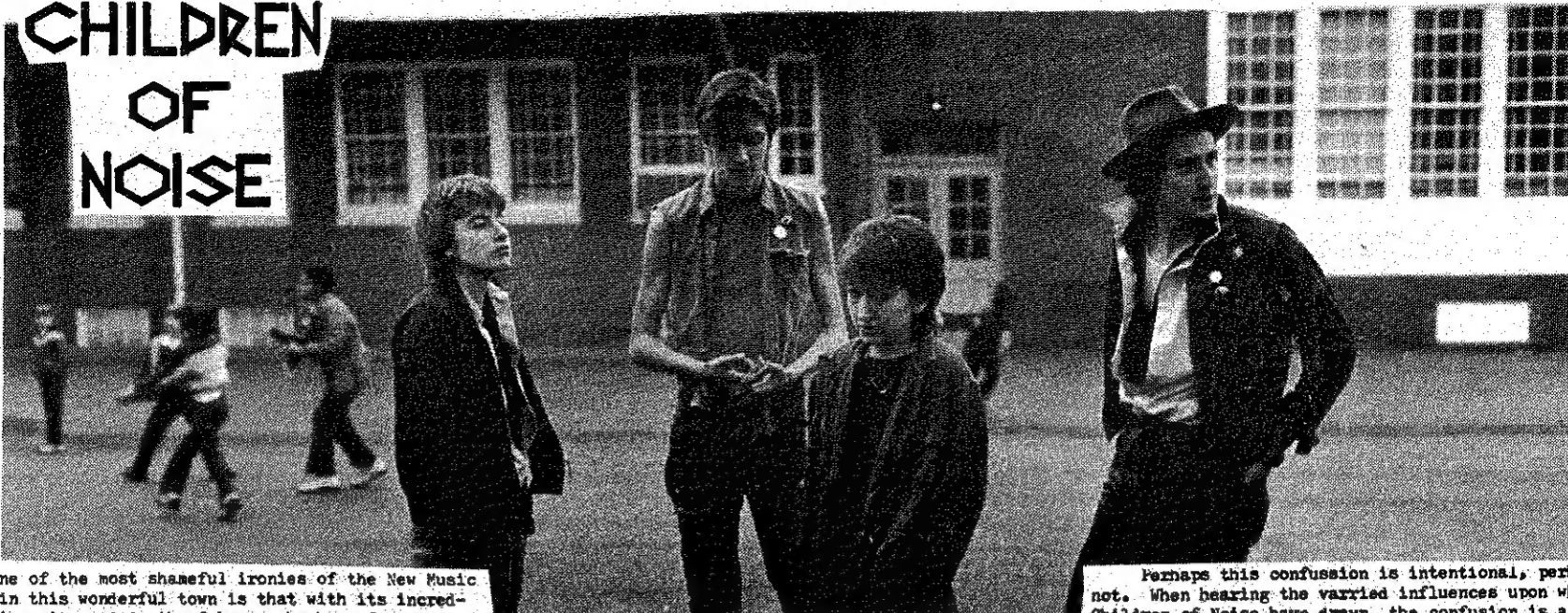
WATCH IN JUNE FOR

JUNE 2--THURSDAY NIGHT
From LEGAL
L.A.: WEAPON
COMMITTEE FOR PUBLIC SAFETY
(C.P.S.) will open.

ERECTOR SET--From Cincinnati, OH
The long awaited return home of
JASON and the NASHVILLE
SCORCHERS
And TENETATIVELY, on JUNE 4--SAT.
The CALL



CHILDREN OF NOISE



One of the most shameful ironies of the New Music Scene in this wonderful town is that with its incredible diversity and depth of bands who have formed during the past 3 years, there has yet to be any serious attention given to those bands striving for an original sound. For whatever reason this hasn't happened, it's not because there are no bands who deserve such attention. Actually, Nashville has several bands that refuse to be stuck in the cover-tune/Top 40 format and attempt to create a sound of their own. One such local group is CHILDREN OF NOISE.

Composed of Jennifer(guitar), Paul(bass), Jason(drums), and Bo(voice), CHILDREN OF NOISE have been working on their sound since late 1981. However, the foundation of this band goes back to 1976 with Jennifer and Bo, who knew each other in West Virginia, planning on a band for the future. As with many other bands, Children of Noise has gone through several "beginning" stages. Many different individuals have worked with and tried out for the band. They even went through N.I.R.'s Musician Referral Service. The current bass player, Paul, was picked up literally running from the Police. Enough said!! Paul joined right after drummer and local eccentric Brian D'Beane began working with the band. Later Brian left, which all concerned agree was due to differences in musical directions with no malice either way. Following Brian's departure Jason Cook joined the band to complete the present lineup.

When talking to the band about just what they are attempting, it is immediately apparent that Children of Noise take themselves and their music very seriously. They have a definite concept about their music; it's "social oriented music" according to Bo. Jennifer explains that they want people to "think and feel about things... (We) want to get (our music) exposed." The band is everything to Paul, Jason, Jennifer, and Bo.

They're not just playing for the fun of it--"Playing for fun is nice, but it doesn't tell you anything," explains Bo. Their personal and family lives have all been put on the line for the sake of the group. It's a classic case of the whole being greater than the sum of all its parts. As Paul put it, "The band is larger than all of us; we want it to go all the way."

On stage the band reflects this attitude by the sheer intensity of their attack. A throbbing, powerful bass takes the lead out front while choppy guitar patterns flow through and with the bass lines. Driving this sound is Jason's chain-saw drumming--the kind of action that creates sweat on one standing next to the stage observing. Sharp-edged, piercing vocals added to all this complete the effect. In many ways CHILDREN OF NOISE live up to their name, however, their "noise" is like injecting a songbird into a tornado.

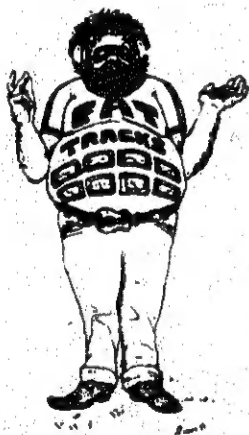
Although they do have a serious commitment to creating their sound, there are times it doesn't come across like they intend. There are moments when their control over the stage seems to drop out and the direction of the band itself seems to become confused. Too, there is the question of dynamics and what effect the Children of Noise stage show does want. However, this problem seems to be more a matter of poise and confidence than any lack of ability. Already the band is looking eagerly to play out-of-town and gain the benefits this has to offer. They have played out once already--in Newport, Kentucky, a suburb of Cincinnati. They had also planned to play in Louisville and Indianapolis, but "Indy fell through and the Beat in Louisville closed." While the responses in Newport was good and the experience challenging, "we confused them basically," says Jennifer.

Perhaps this confusion is intentional, perhaps not. When hearing the varied influences upon which Children of Noise have drawn, the confusion is almost clear. The entire band is captivated with Public Image. For Paul, other influences are the Clash and the Banshees. Jason cites "old Cure along with Reggae and Hardcore" as affecting his drumming, yet the first band he "got into" was Ultravox. Bo and Jennifer both point to U2 and R.E.M. as having a strong impact. Bo adds Bowie, and Jennifer cites Keith Levine. Ironically, none of the group mentions the one band which they happen to sound like more than any of the above, Joy Division. This comparison seems strange to Children of Noise, and rightly so as they don't try to create that "dark funeral dirge" sound. Yet, their playing clearly brings Joy Division to my mind whenever they play.

CHILDREN OF NOISE are probably most interesting because they have this serious positiveness that is trimmed with contradictions. They desire genuine response; they don't consider themselves a dance band, but they feel dance is a natural expression. They seem defensive about not being more accepted, yet they perceive the Nashville scene as "A Peacock Parade". They "like it when people go inward", although they say they want to make social music. All of these things can be reconciled, though, which is the ultimate challenge for a good "serious" band.

To say CHILDREN OF NOISE have potential would be an understatement. They have talent as well as the desire to polish it. Most importantly, they have vision. They've come through that awkward developmental period and landed with feet firmly planted and heads up. The future is just waiting for them for them to grab ahold and make their music, yet they are not waiting around for things to fall into place. Instead, Children of Noise are intently working to make their future vision a reality. **ANDY**

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SEIZE THE ENGLISH THE BEAT BEAT

LOREN

IMAGINE you've just seen what you consider to be one of the best shows ever. R.E.M. and the ENGLISH BEAT. (W 4/5/83) Before the show a chat with Ranking Roger of the BEAT arranges an interview afterward. After the double (or was it triple?) encore the band hangs out to sign autographs and talk with their fans for about an hour, something which seems very admirable for a band of their acclaim. Watching the BEAT with their fans it's evident that they enjoy their fans as much as their fans relish them. But, the BEAT doesn't bask in the attention. For the most part it's mutual friendship and fun (except for Dave Wakeling with @ 20 females).

The interview, as promised, takes place in the Holiday Inn Vanderbilt, where they are staying. Ranking Roger leads the way to room 801 where keyboardist, Blockhead is already relaxing watching t.v. Introductions are made and we settle in for our interview. The talk veers back and forth over all types of topics ending up more like a casual discussion. Very unpretentious, natural, personal and friendly. First, some excerpted observations.

Ranking Roger on their fine performance: "The band is 49% of a good show and the audience is the other 51%."

R.R. on the opening band: "R.E.M. is probably one of the best things to come out of America in quite some time."

Blockhead on band's attitudes: why some bands don't take the time to meet their audience: "I'm not like that myself but I can understand why people get like that. You're constantly meeting people who are overwhelmingly friendly, or overwhelmingly enthusiastic and it could easily push some people to retreat. Sometimes you get to a limit of how many friendly people you can meet. There are some people though, that have got it all worked out. It's all official, it's all part of a big scam. One member of the band will go flying into the limosine...."

Roger on their latest album 'Special Beat Service': "We all wrote all the songs. The way we've changed it hasn't been meant. I suppose we got bored of doing one thing all the time. When we first came out, you know, people called us a ska band. Now people don't know what to call us. So we are classified as dance because we play reggae, ska, pop, rock. We play a combination of everything and that's what makes us different."

NIR: Are there any differences between your British and American albums?

Roger: We didn't put 'Ranking Full Stop' or 'Tears of a Clown' on the first album in England. In England you release 3 tracks off an album and that's it or else people say you're ripping them off cause they've already got the album and yet you expect them to buy the singles as well which are already on the album. Three singles are considered okay in England... In the charts 'Too Nice to Talk to' reached #7. We've never been #1. The highest we got was 'Mirror in the Bathroom' at #4. This last album went to #20.

NIR: Where are you both from?

Roger: I was born in England. My parents came from St. Lucia, which is in the West Indies... They speak a king of Patoi, half French, half pigeon English, it's a real weird language. I grew up speaking English though. My parents actually forbidded me to speak Patoi. I don't know why. My mom talked to me in Patoi and I'd answer her back in English but, I never did really speak it. But when I get together with my cousins we say 'like big mon tawlk'. But in my toasting in the songs, that's Jamaican Patoi. I did a rap for the Clash like that... went into the studios and did this toasting, a dub version of 'Rock the Casbah'. It should be released soon. Toasting is the Jamaican word for American rapping. It's really complicated because rapping comes from toasting but, rapping has helped toasting become well known. Toasting started in Backyard meaning England, correction, Jamaica.

Blockhead: I'm from Birmingham and my parents are from Birmingham and my grand-parents are from Birmingham....

The phone rings twice. Blockhead answers. "We are just poor farmers, we can not afford to pay the room bill.... every year the crops fail.... Oh no no no c'est not posseebla! AHHH!!He certainly is.... (hands the phone to Roger)"

Roger: (to the phone in a deep Jamaican sounding husky grumble) Goote evening Chansaly wot can I do for yoo, eh? Who's that? What the fuck's appenin'?

Blockhead: Whoops

Roger: Sorry. (I assume in apology for cursing with a female in the room)

Roger: (on the phone, normally) I don't know... 10, 15. Yes I'm interested. What time and when? Yeah, okay, aye. (Back to us) Want to go party? Yeah mon, must party. In this town must party. This is Nashville you know..... Party arrangements are made and we wrap up. NIR: Not that I doubt it but, how come you have such an incredibly overwhelmingly happy attitude? Tell me, is it fake or real? Blockhead: Absolutely fake. It's a scandal. It's hard enough to be romantic about certain things. It freaks me out when I think that 7 such weird individuals, because I think that everybody's pretty damn weird and freaky and I'm sure they must include me in that category too, right? I know it. I think that's really so.... If we were all the same we'd probably fall out.

Roger: Yeah, that's the thing, we all come from totally different backgrounds. The same way the music came together the same way the band happened. Nothing was planned. It just happened. People just came to it. Dave and Andy were working making solid panels and started playing these tunes on their acoustic guitars. Then somebody says why don't you form a group. So they did, and found our bass player. Then came back to Birmingham and all got jobs, then met Everett who was working in a kettle factory. The first gig they ever did they supported the group which I was in, which was a punk group called the Dum Dum Boys and I used to be their drummer. 'Bout three months later the group split up, Dum Dum Boys and I started going to Beat gigs and bringing loads

of punks with me because I used to be like really well known all the way through school days. Not as a musician, but as a hard knock. When I started to get to know punks I went dancing in this pub called the Crown and started doing lots of toasting. And I got lots of friends and everyone knew me as Black Punk wearing leathers, bondies and trousers. I used to be into Beat gigs anyway....

Blockhead: The first time I saw you, you had red gold and green hair.

Roger: Yeah and then I dyed it ginger. I mean I used to be a real punk...

NIR: How old are you now?

Roger: I'm 21. (I'm in disbelief but, Roger continues) I was 13 when I started toasting and joined the Beat at 17 or 18.

Blockhead: I'm 39. Life begins at 40 they tell me and I'm gonna know pretty damn quick. I sometimes think something must be wrong. Because where every year of your life things seem to get better and better you think well aren't I supposed to be having 7 good years and 7 lean years... but, no. I've been very lucky. The main thing is you keep your health you're alright in this life. Everything else will fall into place.

Blockhead decides not to go party (possibly how he keeps his health) but, Roger is ready. Downstairs in the lobby a group of people have already gathered to invite the band to party. The Beat goes on to join their followers. An admirable dedication to their fans? I guess that's what they call special Beat service.



&

WKDA

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Loren Gerson WKDA, MD

On paper WKDA is doing very well. Radio ratings might not be as important to you compared to the songs you actually hear on the radio but, ratings play a major role in determining what you will or won't hear on the radio. Therefore, they are important. In our last Birch Report, which is a monthly radio ratings indicator, KDA increased four-fold. (not bad, eh? - actually we owe it to you) This mid-Feb. to mid-March Birch shows that we are moving at quite a clip in the right direction, upward. I don't foresee a change in that trend either. It's truly an inspiration for me to see that Nashville would receive a modern music station with such acceptance. So...we're lookin' real good!

THE LATEST ON MALE MODEL, the trio from NYC is that they've decided to halt their search for a new name but, will continue their quest for a new producer. Despite their requests for ideas on a name they will keep MALE MODEL. "We're stuck with it. Male Model is like herpes: it won't go away. Accept it and join the crowd", says guitarist Cliff Pemsler. As of yet they haven't found a new producer for future releases. Aaron Watson, drummer, says "Only geeks have approached us, and geeks can't deal with geeks. They have wrong ideas about us. We have quirks in our songs but no one seems to pick up on it. Records are supposed to be perfect but, we have quirks." Presently MALE MODEL has recorded a 3 song cassette, and will finish what they call their "Love Tour '83" soon.

HI-- We're looking for a drummer, nothing fancy-just enthusiastic. If you are interested call Kathy at 646-9798, or Jennifer at 383-3969.

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WALL OF YODODOO

comes up with a more...a deeper, wider ranging kind of expression. I mean, Ennio Marconi, for example, was really an Italian and he wrote in the medium of western music. In that he brought in a lot of other influences too, Italian influences, and European harmonic influences, and things that really kind of stretched the boundaries of that music. Those are my favorites, but this isn't to say that we watch westerns all day. I just kind of like those Clint Eastwood westerns. It's kind of like the man with the tainted soul...

NIR: It's an interesting paradox, because your run-of-the-mill band-with-synthesizers tends to invoke science-fiction film images...

Stan: Well it's funny see, because, in the beginning, synthesizers were always construed as being "of the future". Now, how could they be? Because the future hasn't happened yet...a synthesizer is no colder an instrument than any other instrument you would choose to pick up. A guitar is nothing more than a piece of wood with six or seven (seven?) wires on it. It's really the human quality added to the instrument that is able to generate the warmth from it, and nothing more than that. The instrument has absolutely nothing to do with it. Limitations are invariably set by the musician, and not the instrument.

NIR: If you could be anywhere in the world right now, where would it be?

Stan: Mostly everywhere I am. I like it for a little while. I'm basically kind of a malcontent...I love it anyplace for at least

a couple of days, then I usually want to get out of there. I think it's really just a matter of being restless. I'm just very restless and I like to move around alot. I think that's maybe why I finally ended up in LA because LA is so large and wide I can move around alot. It offers alot of geographical freedom...
NIR: Where were you from originally?
Stan: Barstow, which is even larger than that... I mean not larger than LA, there was just so much there and so much of nothing there. There's a lot of grilled-cheese sandwich shops, hot water companies, and things like that. Barstow is where I took up ventriloquism. That was the first thing I really ever did when I was younger. I think it was my first brush with show business...I make fun about this thing show business. You really can't hide the fact that what you're doing, in a rock and roll idiom, basically gets down to entertainment. If anything comes out after that, it's really kind of good that people notice it. But, you really can't be in a position to bore people in this medium, because it's really not the kind of music that you'd want to sit down to, and cross your legs, and you know, eat a GooGoo to. What I'm saying is that I don't really feel that I want to be anywhere. The grand philosophical question that anybody needs to ask one's self is whether or whether not to commit suicide... it's to be or not to be. Once you get over that point, you say to yourself that I'm through whining, I'm through complaining. I'm just going to, like, fix it myself. So many people complain about where they are and what they're doing, and how someone's done that to them, and "Gosh, I wish I was there

because I can't be here", and really you find out that really it's kind of a self-fulfilling prophecy of victimization when you get into

that kind of spirit of thinking. So I just changed that aspect of myself quite a long time ago. So I'm always satisfied wherever I am and if I'm not, I move.

NIR: Where is Barstow?

Stan: Barstow is about ninety miles out of Los Angeles. It's right near Nevada though... it's midway between Las Vegas and Los Angeles. It's kind of a place where a lot of old cowboys move through there with their wives on obligatory trips to Vegas on a last vacation or something.

NIR: A lost weekend?

Stan: More or less, yeah. "Lost Weekend" was kind of written from being in Barstow...

I used to go to the 7-11 around my house and see a lot of these people kind of rolling up and asking their wives or husbands for their last dimes so they could at least get some cigarettes on the way home.

NIR: Would you like to leave any comments for those people up front you were directing your onstage banter towards to read and reflect on?

Stan: All I can say to them is show-business is my life...what more can I say?

There was a lot more to this interview besides what was printed here...comments on video games, racism, a discussion with an anonymous Vanderbilt intellectual-type on the social relevance of "Factory" (very interesting). If you'd like to hear the tape, get in touch with Allen Green c/o this paper.

BOW

WOW
WOW



-ANDY

BOW WOW WOW at the Exit/In? It seemed too good to be true when I first heard it, but yes, it was true, and BOW WOW WOW did play on Sunday, May 8, and the turnout was good, and now I'm trying to sit here and write up a few brief thoughts on the show. Perhaps some background will help put what transpired in context:

BOW WOW WOW formed in London in 1980 when Dave Barbarossa (drums), Mathew Ashman (guitar), and Leroy Gorman (bass), all formerly Adam's Ant-men and 14-year old Annabella Lwin hooked up with each other and Malcolm McLaren, master youth and media manipulator and former manager of the Sex Pistols and New York Dolls. The group achieved immediate notice and notoriety with the release of their first single "C-30, C-60, C-90, GO!" in which Annabella sings of the joys of home taping while the drums and bass pound out an incessant tribal beat. Subsequent British releases followed (including Your Cassette Pet, an 8-song, cassette-only release), and in due course the band hooked up with RCA Records who released the band's debut album SEE JUNGLE, SEE JUNGLE, GO JOIN YOUR GANG YEAH, CITY ALL OVER GO APE CRAZY, a tribal celebration that proved to be a big hit with critics and dance lovers alike. The band received massive airplay on AM, FM, and MTV with their recent remake of "I Want Candy" and its followup, "Baby On No".

And then the bands disputes with manager Malcom came to a head, and there was a highly bitter and public parting of the ways. Malcom has gone on to scratch and street pop, and BOW WOW WOW has released When The Going Gets Tough, The Tough Gets Going. The new album is very pop and polished in the production and sound, and while catchy, has made many old fans wonder if the band had gone from Malcom's manipulations straight to RCA's. Was BOWWOWWOW touring America to promote the new LP and single and try to become successful and make lots of money, or was the group out to re-establish contact with their fans and show that they had survived the split with Malcom and were still a band worth listening to? N.I.R. wanted to find out, and discover what BOW WOW WOW was really like under all the hype.

It didn't bode well when sources informed us that the band was quarrelling amongst themselves and not really up for a show before a small crowd in a new town. Attempts to interview the band, in whole or in part, were unsuccessful on our part, although we heard the KDA chat went well. So, all I had to answer my questions on the current state of BOW WOW WOW was the show itself.

BASIC STATIC got the evening off to a rousing start. They were hot to play and made a very good impression on the crowd, most of whom had not heard them before. Tom's vocals and guitar and Doug's guitar came through clean and clear while Gary's bass and Lynn's drums connected for a solid beat. Basic Static's originals, at least the fast ones like "(I Don't Wanna Be A) War Hero", were very, very good, and they did an excellent cover of Johnny Cash's "Love Is A Hateful Thing". The thing I liked most, though, was the way they got into playing their music for the crowd, with a smile and a shout. Basic Static get better every time I see them, I hope they'll be playing out a lot more now that they've caught a lot of people's eyes and ears.

...SO, I was in a mood to get down and shake it with BOW WOW WOW, pictures of lovely little Annabella dancing around my head...

The lights went down, the band came out, the stage lights went up, and BOW WOW WOW surged into "Baby On No". The band was playing the song at a faster tempo than the studio version, which was alright by me as I really hadn't been that thrilled with the song before. What was bad was that the sound was a lot more muddled than it should have been. Thankfully, it got clearer after the band paused briefly before launching into "Roustabout". Things began to falter some with "Sexy Eiffel Towers"—Annabella just can't recreate live her orgasmic delivery on the original —, but the band bounced back with some impressive playing on "Ricki Dee" and "Do You Want To Hold Me?" from the new LP. BOW WOW WOW then plodded through "Louis Quarterz" and "Mile High Club", more oldies. Throughout the rest of their 55 minute set, I noticed the contrast between BOW WOW WOW's renditions of the material from their new LP and their older stuff that had been done with Malcom. On the old stuff ("Giant Sized Baby Thing" & "Wild In The Country" for example) the band seemed like they were just going through the motions. Annabella looked like she was concentrating more on her cute stage moves than on smiling and singing.

The most interesting band member to watch turned out to be not Annabella, but drummer Dave Barbarossa whose command of the beat from his odd but effectively designed drum kit was a marvel to watch. The songs they did off of the new LP were quite good; absent the pop production methods that detract so much from the LP, songs like "Aphrodesiac" and "Do You Wanna Hold Me" came across much stronger. BOW WOW WOW did close out the evening in fine form with "Prince Of Darkness", their big hit "I Want Candy", and the song that started it all "C-30, C-60, C-90, GO!". Annabella shouted "Thank you; you've been a nice audience. Good night." and left with the band. They returned for a pair of prefatory encores, "Sun, Sea, & Piracy" and "Fools Rush In".

After it was over I had to wonder what was with BOW WOW WOW. Were they just not into playing Nashville? Had they just grown tired of having done the old songs so long? Or perhaps they're a group like Blondie who were great in the studio but shitty live? Why didn't they do more of their dance hits like "W.O.R.K."? I don't pretend to know, and I didn't get the chance to ask the band. As a long time fan, I was grateful to have the chance to see BOW WOW WOW live, especially in a small club in Nashville, even if they didn't excite as much as I had expected and hoped. All in all, BASIC STATIC came out miles ahead, performance wise, in my book. I will go see them again.

Cat's Concerts

by Allen Green

If Nashville will support it, we can have a thriving, energetic new-music scene here. Most readers will remember how few and far-between local shows by national new-music acts were in this town before Cat's Concerts came into being. Now, we've had The Psychedelic Furs, The Bangle's, Wall Of Voodoo, and Bow Wow Wow all in less than a month (it's been a BUSY month for us N.I.R. writers!). And if audiences will keep turning out, then the future holds promise of more of the same.

Cat's Concerts is the brainchild of Steve West, manager of Cat's Records on West End, and Bruce Carlock, the vice president of Music City Record Distributors, Cat's parent company. Generally speaking, they handle the promotion end, and leave the production end to others. In the case of The Furs, it was Owsley and Leslie Manier who set things up. These two are no strangers to the world of live music. Owsley, at one time, booked The Exit/In, and Leslie used to book at Cantrell's. For The Bangle's, Wall Of Voodoo, and Bow Wow Wow, Cat's worked with New West Productions/Contemporary Productions. With Praxis Records numero uno Jack Emerson serving as liaison, Ted Mankin of New West made connection with Cat's to arrange these shows. Then Jack worked with Cat's to actually get things rolling.

For now at least, Cat's main focus is new-music. And since most new-music acts aren't large enough to fill a big hall, they're leaving that stuff to Cumberland Concerts, Sound Seventy, etc. The Furs at the War Memorial Auditorium is about as large of show as we can expect from Cat's in the near future. Exit/In and Cantrell's are more appropriate venues for these up and coming acts.

Another aspect of Cat's Concerts we've not mentioned yet are their parking-lot concerts featuring some of our hottest local acts. These shows are kind of a spin-off from last Labor Day's highly successful Last Chance Dance Party. The first in a series of six this summer was last month when Factual and Practical Stylists played to a very receptive audience (and a few aggravated neighbors) at

the West End Cat's store. Although beset with a few, slight technical problems, the bands delivered tight, professional sets, and a good time was had by all. Later this month, the second parking lot party will be held at Cat's new Nolensville Rd. location featuring the Times and The Wrong Band.

The turnout at The Furs, and at The Bangles was good, but the Wall Of Voodoo turnout was less than hoped for. It's too early to tell about Bow Wow Wow but one can only hope that it will be good. If we expect to continue getting quality shows here in town, we've simply got to support them, and show up. People like those at Cat's, and at KDA, are committed to make this new-music thing grow in Nashville and it's up to us to see that they succeed.

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